

1 Liner Retention System

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3 This present invention relates to apparatus for aligning
4 and securing cylinder liners to pumps and in particular,
5 though not exclusively, to apparatus for aligning and
6 securing cylinder liners of reciprocating pumps to their
7 respective pumping modules.

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9 In the past, there have been several different types of
10 ways to attach cylinder liners to their respective
11 pumping modules and these may vary according to make of
12 pump in which they are used. One embodiment presently
13 known employs a tapered concentric clamp, while another
14 uses a concentric screw clamping arrangement.

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16 It is important that the means for aligning and securing
17 the cylinder liners may be implemented without undue
18 effort and down-time. Cylinder liners are required to be
19 changed frequently and this causes considerable
20 inconvenience if the means and method for releasing the
21 old cylinder liners and fitting the replacement cylinder
22 liners are slow or difficult to operate. It has been
23 found that original pump manufacturers' systems or means

1 for securing cylinder liners to respective pumping
2 modules have been difficult to operate for a plurality of
3 reasons, including the involvement of heavy components,
4 the handling of which may be dangerous for operators.
5 These systems also require considerable strength, skill
6 and reliability of operators, together with the use of
7 heavy tools in confined spaces. Yet further, the securing
8 force is dependent on the extent of wear and the general
9 condition of a plurality of the securing components.

10

11 US RE37,483 has overcome some of these problems in
12 providing an apparatus for securing a cylinder liner to a
13 pumping module in a reciprocating pump which has a set of
14 arrangements each with a hydraulically activated piston,
15 a rod attached to the piston which is adapted to receive
16 a nut, the retraction of which forcibly compels in
17 attraction against a spring, the cylinder liner and the
18 pumping module. In particular, this apparatus provides a
19 tool which can be operated by hand. A further advantage
20 is that the tool uses components which are considerably
21 lighter than those of the prior art to ease handling.

22

23 However, excepting the nuts and clamping ring, the
24 assembly of the apparatus must be completed prior to
25 lifting and positioning on the pumping module. Thus
26 although the individual components may be comparatively
27 lighter, the combined weight of the assembled apparatus
28 makes it difficult to handle. A further disadvantage of
29 this apparatus is that the metal springs used may be
30 prone to failure if the pump is instantaneously run at
31 full speed. This is because a hydraulic shock is set-up
32 through the pump which causes the springs to flatten and
33 fracture by banging.

1
2 It is an object of at least one embodiment of the present
3 invention to provide a liner retention tool which
4 mitigates at least some of the problems of the prior art.
5

6 According to a first aspect of the present invention,
7 there is provided an apparatus for securing a cylinder
8 liner to a pumping module, the apparatus comprising one
9 or more arrangements each fastened to said pumping
10 module, each arrangement comprising an assembly including
11 a piston, the piston acting on a tension plate, the
12 tension plate having a stud rod extending therefrom out
13 from the assembly at an end distal to the pumping module
14 and thereon passing through a respective aperture in a
15 clamping member adapted to grip the cylinder liner, the
16 rod having a first portion substantially surrounded in an
17 elastomeric member and a second portion threaded to
18 receive a nut, wherein initial compression of the
19 elastomeric member by the tension plate and tightening of
20 the nut toward the pumping module, followed by release of
21 the elastomeric member forcibly compel the cylinder liner
22 towards the pumping module.

23
24 Preferably the elastomeric member comprises a multi-layer
25 structure having layers of flexible material interleaved
26 with layers of strengthening material. The flexible
27 material may be a rubber or the like. The strengthening
28 material may be a metal, composite or other known
29 material having a relatively high Young's modulus. In one
30 embodiment the strengthening material may be a fabric
31 reinforcement arranged through the elastomer.
32

1 Use of an elastomer prevents failure by hydraulic shock
2 if the pump is started at full speed.

3

4 Preferably the assembly comprises at least two parts, a
5 first part including the piston and a second part
6 including the tensioning plate, rod and elastomeric
7 member wherein the parts are separable for assembly and
8 disassembly. Preferably the first part is located in a
9 housing. The second part may also be located in a
10 housing.

11

12 This separation of the parts provides for easier assembly
13 over the prior art.

14

15 Preferably the/each piston is a hydraulic piston. More
16 preferably the piston and a base of the housing define a
17 space for accommodating hydraulic fluid.

18

19 Preferably also there are four arrangements arranged
20 equidistantly around and externally of a circumference of
21 the cylinder liner. Alternatively there are six
22 arrangements arranged equidistantly around and externally
23 of a circumference of the cylinder liner.

24

25 Preferably the clamping member comprises a clamping ring
26 including the apertures for receiving the stud rods.

27

28 According to a second aspect of the present invention
29 there is provided a method of securing a cylinder liner
30 to a pumping module of a pump, the method comprising the
31 steps:

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- 1 (a) locating a first part of an assembly including a
- 2 piston onto the pumping module;
- 3 (b) locating a second part of an assembly including an
- 4 elastomeric unit and a stud bolt having a tension
- 5 plate attached thereto, onto the first part;
- 6 (c) locating the cylinder liner against a seal on the
- 7 pumping module;
- 8 (d) placing a clamping ring over the cylinder liner;
- 9 (e) inserting the stud bolt through an aperture in the
- 10 clamping ring;
- 11 (f) placing a nut on a threaded portion of the stud bolt
- 12 and locating the nut against the clamping ring;
- 13 (g) actuating the piston against the tension plate to
- 14 compress the elastomeric member and force the stud
- 15 bolt through the aperture;
- 16 (h) at full compression, tightening the nut against
- 17 the clamping ring; and
- 18 (i) releasing the piston and by the expansion of the
- 19 elastomeric member thereby sealing the cylinder
- 20 liner to the pumping module.

21

22 The method may include the step of pumping hydraulic
23 fluid to the piston to actuate the piston.

24

25 An example embodiment of the invention will now be
26 described by way example only, with reference to the
27 accompanying Figures, in which:

28

29 FIG. 1 is a cross-sectional view of an apparatus
30 according to the present invention mounted on a pumping
31 module with a cylinder liner.

32

33 A reciprocating pump generally described at 1 comprises a

1 module 2 and cylinder liner 3. It is desirable that the
2 cylinder liner 3 is securely held up against the face 4
3 of the module 2. Between the cylinder liner 3 and the
4 module 2 there is provided a seal 5 which, in its
5 unenergized (i.e., uncompressed) state, must be
6 compressed by the cylinder liner 3 to close a gap created
7 between the adjacent faces of the module 2 and cylinder
8 liner 3.

9
10 In order to prevent the existence of this gap, it is
11 necessary to forcibly push the cylinder liner 3 against
12 the module 2 and this is achieved by securing means,
13 generally described at 6. The effect of compressing the
14 cylinder liner 3 against the face 4 of the module 2 is to
15 energise or compress the seal 5. This compression is of
16 course desirable to increase the effectiveness and
17 efficiency of the seal 5. The securing means 6 comprises
18 one or more arrangements 20. Each arrangement includes an
19 assembly comprising three parts abutted together; a first
20 part 16, integral with a baseplate 9, located against the
21 pumping module 2; a second part 17, the central portion,
22 located against the first part; and a third part 20
23 located at an end distal to the pumping module 2 and
24 abutted to the second part 17. The assemblies are
25 enclosed in housings, generally indicated at 7.

26
27 The first part 16 houses a piston 8 which is
28 hydraulically operated by the insertion of hydraulic
29 fluid into a space 23 between the base of the piston and
30 the rear face of the housing. In this way piston 8 may
31 travel into the second part 17. The first part 16 is
32 integral with the baseplate 9. The second part 17 is a
33 cylindrical body into which is located an elastomeric

1 member 10 and a stud bolt 11. The elastomeric member 10
2 has a cylindrical body and a bore passing therethrough.
3 The elastomeric member 10 is made up of layers of a
4 flexible material e.g. rubber and a strengthening
5 material e.g. metal or fabric arranged perpendicular to
6 the bore. The rod 11 has a tension plate 15 attached to
7 one end and has a threaded portion 21 on the opposing
8 end. The rod 11 is located through the bore of the
9 elastomeric member 10 and extends from the housing away
10 from the pumping module 2. Tension plate 15 has a
11 circular face arranged to abut the piston 8 and an
12 annular face arranged to abut a bottom face of the
13 elastomeric member 10. The third part 23 of the housing 7
14 is a top cover plate having an aperture through which the
15 rod 11 passes.

16

17 On exiting the housing 7 the rod passes over a lug 14
18 located on the cylinder 3 and through an aperture in a
19 clamping ring 13 arranged around the cylinder. The
20 threaded portion 21 of the rod 11 extends beyond the
21 clamping ring 13 and a nut 12 is placed thereon.

22

23 In an alternative embodiment the housing 7 covers only
24 the first part and the second and third parts are
25 exposed.

26

27 In the embodiment shown, the securing means 6 includes
28 one or more of arrangements 20 having the aforementioned
29 components 7,8,10,11,12 and 15. The arrangement is
30 permanently bolted by bolts 22 to the module 2, although
31 the nuts 12 are detachable, thereby allowing removal of
32 the cylinder liner 3.

33

1 Advantageously in assembling the securing means 6 to the
2 pumping module 2, the baseplate 9 with the first part 16
3 of the housing can be separated from the remaining
4 components of the housing. The remaining components can
5 all be assembled individually. This reduces the need to
6 manhandle heavy pre-assembled parts onto the pumping
7 module 2.

8

9 In use, when a cylinder liner 3 is positioned against or
10 nearly against the module 2, the shoulder or clamping
11 ring 13 is then fitted over each of the stud rods 11. The
12 nuts 12 are then threadably applied to the rods 11. The
13 method of forcibly securing the cylinder liner 3 to the
14 pumping module 2 is then implemented. This involves
15 inserting hydraulic fluid into the space 23 between the
16 head of piston 8 and the baseplate 9, such that the
17 elastomeric unit 10 is compressed and rods 11 are
18 extended to a greater extent outwith the top plate 23 of
19 the housing 7 and the nut 12 is given freedom to be
20 tightened by further rotation along rod 11 towards the
21 clamping ring 13 simultaneously. The hydraulic fluid is
22 then released from the space 23 so that the piston 8
23 retracts towards the module 2 and the elastomeric member
24 10 expands. The cylinder 3 is then secured against the
25 module 2.

26

27 Preferably, the process of tightening the nuts 12 while
28 compressing the elastomeric units 10 should be carried
29 out sequentially around the arrangements 20. It should be
30 noted that the apparatus and method described herein
31 allows the nuts 12 to be tightened with light hand tools.
32 It will be appreciated that this is a considerable
33 advantage over the requirement of using heavy tools which

1 was, in the past, required.

2

3 The invention thus provides components which are
4 considerably lighter than comparative components used
5 heretobefore. In view of negating the requirement of
6 heavy tooling or handling, the components are less likely
7 to be damaged during the removal or securing of cylinder
8 liners and thus the invention permits greater
9 repeatability and reliability. Furthermore, the need for
10 intensive manual or skilled by operators is also
11 mitigated. Similarly, there is a reduced danger of injury
12 to operators or by-standers during such operational and
13 maintenance functions.

14

15 It will also be appreciated that, because the apparatus
16 can be readily dismantled into easily manually
17 transportable components, installation in difficult
18 locations can be safely carried out without the need for
19 heavy lifting equipment. It is a feature of the invention
20 that, by varying the composition and construction of the
21 elastomer unit 10, a very wide range of operating duties
22 can be met allowing accurate matching to each
23 application. Additionally the use of an elastomer unit
24 advantageously absorbs shock if the pumping module is
25 switched on at a high rate.

26

27 Further modifications and improvements may be
28 incorporated without departing from the spirit or scope
29 of the invention. For example, though the invention has
30 particular relevance to reciprocating pumps such as oil-
31 field mud pumps, the invention is not, however, limited
32 to mud pumps but finds application in a variety of
33 reciprocating or positive displacement pumps.

1 Additionally, though the clamping ring in the embodiment
2 described abuts a lug on the cylinder, cylinders without
3 lugs may also be used with the invention.
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